releasably and interchangeably support a selectively variable one of a plurality of different types of pointing device modules each operative by a user of said portable computer to controllably reposition the image on said screen;

providing a plurality of different types of pointing device modules; and

using said externally accessible connection portion to releasably secure a selected one of said plurality of different types of pointing device modules to said housing structure.

34. The method of claim **33** wherein said step of providing a plurality of different types of pointing device modules includes the steps of providing a pointing stick module and providing a touchpad module.

35. The method of claim **33** wherein:

said externally accessible connection portion includes a cutout area formed in an exterior wall section of said housing structure, and

said using step includes the step of inserting the selected pointing device module into said cutout area.

36. A method of constructing a portable computer comprising the steps of:

providing a screen on which a movable image may be displayed:

positioning the screen on a housing structure having a connection portion operative to releasably and interchangeably support a selectively variable one of a plurality of different types of pointing device modules each operative by a user of said portable computer to controllably reposition the image on said screen, said connection portion including a cutout area formed in an exterior wall section of said housing structure:

providing a plurality of different types of pointing device modules: and

using said connection portion to releasably secure a selected one of said plurality of different types of pointing device modules to said housing structure, said using step including the step of inserting the selected pointing device module into said cutout area,

said cutout area having a spaced pair of wall areas therein, and

said using step further including the steps of:

tilting the selected pointing device module in a first direction before inserting it into said cutout area, and

tilting the selected pointing device module in a second direction opposite said first direction after inserting the selected pointing device module into said cutout area to responsively cause the inserted pointing device module to removably latch into place within said cutout area.

37. The method of claim **36** wherein:

said housing structure has a first electrical connector therein,

each pointing device module has a second electrical connector thereon, and

said using step further includes the step of causing the mating engagement of said first electrical connector with the second electrical connector of the selected pointing device module in response to performing said step of tilting the selected pointing device module in said second direction.

38. The method of claim **37** further comprising the step of inserting a computer component into said cutout area, in an underlying supporting relationship with the selected pointing device module, after performing said step of tilting the selected pointing device module in said second direction.

39. The method of claim **38** wherein said step of inserting a computer component is performed using a hard disk drive tray structure.

* * * * *